UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
25th meeting
held on
Friday, 1 November 1996
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HAMBURGER (Netherlands)

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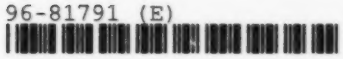
Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/51/SR.25
2 July 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

96-81791 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 96: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued) A/51/59, A/51/73, A/51/87, A/51/120, A/51/127, A/51/138, A/51/208-S/1996/543, A/51/210, A/51/295, A/51/314, A/51/357, A/51/375, A/51/462-S/1996/831 and A/51/529)

(b) AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(i) AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/51/168 and Corr.1, A/51/208- S/1996/543 and A/51/319)

(ii) RENEWAL OF THE DIALOGUE ON STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP (continued) (A/51/211-S/1996/551 and A/51/485)

1. Mr. GHANKHUYAG (Mongolia) said that notwithstanding some positive developments in the world economy, including improvements in the economies of a number of developing countries, imbalances still were dominant. The situation was further exacerbated by a new protectionism, environmental degradation, heavy debt burdens, constraints on access to technologies, volatile financial flows and the stagnation or decline of official development assistance. Many developing countries, in particular the least developed among them and those at a geographical and ecological disadvantage, had been unable to share the benefits of globalization and continued to face a high risk of marginalization. Most of those countries had not participated in regional economic integration; in that connection, his delegation reaffirmed its determination to pursue its efforts to join regional economic groupings in general, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council in particular.

2. The Agenda for Development should devote particular attention to the critical situation of the least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries, as well as to countries with economies in transition. It should determine specific measures to foster an enabling international environment conducive to providing developing countries with increased financial and technical assistance, access to financial flows on a predictable and assured basis, increased foreign direct investment and a durable solution to debt problems. The Agenda for Development also should establish the means for the implementation of the main decisions reached at the recent major United Nations conferences.

3. Mongolia, which was a developing nation undergoing a structural transition, believed that the Agenda for Development should be a major guideline for international cooperation for development in the 1990s and beyond. His delegation was concerned that the negotiations on the Agenda were proceeding so slowly. Due consideration should be given to new ideas which might enhance the document, and his delegation supported the proposal to establish a development strategy and development targets based on a new partnership between developed and developing countries. Language already agreed upon, however, should not be altered.

4. General Assembly resolution 50/227 provided a solid basis for the forthcoming negotiations on institutional issues and follow-up to the Agenda for Development. The role of the Economic and Social Council should be upgraded, a step that was feasible under the Charter of the United Nations, in order to enable it to assume a more effective coordinating role. His delegation also agreed that there was an urgent need to strengthen ties between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions.

5. Mr. PRENDERGAST (Jamaica) said that the Agenda for Development should serve as a medium for the implementation of the conclusions and decisions reached at the recent major United Nations conferences. The Agenda must respond to the urgent demands for international cooperation for development. Political inertia on the part of the international community would have a devastating impact on the developing countries. The negotiations on the Agenda should strive to build consensus on important policy areas so as to stimulate development.

6. In the negotiations on institutional issues and follow-up, it was essential to provide the overall framework for an understanding of how the funds, programmes and development agencies of the United Nations affected development processes and seek innovative means to ensure that follow-up action was taken, over and above the follow-up to the agreements reached at the recent international conferences. The discussions should take into account the fact that development was people-centred, must be sustainable and must therefore focus on the improvement of the human condition. Development must be approached in a comprehensive and integrated manner, and due attention must be paid to the role of the major development agencies and organs of the United Nations in the implementation of the Agenda. In conclusion, he emphasized that it was essential to accord as much importance to sustained economic growth and sustainable development as was accorded to international peace and security.

7. Mr. AL-HITTI (Iraq) said that the establishment of international peace and security required the provision of adequate resources for development. Ten per cent of the resources available as a result of disarmament should be utilized for that purpose.

8. The globalization of the world economy in many cases had resulted in the marginalization of certain segments of society. It was therefore essential to eliminate obstacles to trade and to the transfer of technology. The particular circumstances of each country must be borne in mind in the context of efforts to narrow the gap between North and South and to alleviate poverty. Economic measures must not be used as sanctions against the developing countries, and those countries must protect themselves, for example through South-South cooperation and regional cooperation arrangements, against certain economic policies and strategies used by the developed countries. Economic sanctions ran counter to the purposes and principles underlying the World Trade Organization and other international organizations concerned with trade and development.

9. As to the renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership, he said that the partnership should be based on clearly defined relations and must ensure cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels between rich and poor countries, with a view to finding solutions at the local, regional and international levels.

10. The various partners must demonstrate the requisite political will to tackle the roadblocks to development. The current imbalance in international economic relations undermined international peace and security. It was therefore imperative to promote North-South cooperation in the interests of democracy and international diplomacy and in order to enable the developing countries to free themselves from the hegemony of certain developed countries.

11. Mr. BIROUK (Algeria) deplored the slow progress made thus far in the negotiations on the Agenda for Development and said that the task must be approached with far greater determination, given the fact that the vast majority of the world's people lived in abject poverty. The consensus on the need for international cooperation for development must be translated into concrete action with respect to international trade, foreign debt, the transfer of technology, direct investment and financial flows, poverty eradication and the protection of the environment.

12. Specifically, the United Nations must be provided with increased resources to enable it to discharge its important role, bearing in mind in particular the new challenges identified at the recent international conferences. To that end, it was essential to ensure the stability and predictability of resources for the operational activities of the United Nations system. Moreover, the negotiations on the Agenda for Development must not serve as a pretext for an attempt to reform the United Nations system in a manner which would undermine the Organization's development activities. Accordingly, the Agenda for Development must constitute, if not a turning point, at least a significant evolution, in practical terms, in international economic and financial relations, and it must call unequivocally for a new international ethic which properly reflected the demands of economic progress and development. In conclusion, he commended the Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly on An Agenda for Development on its work.

13. Mr. ACHA (Peru) said that his delegation had hoped for a more active exchange of views on the Agenda for Development in order to enable delegations to understand the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the General Assembly more fully. The work on an Agenda for Development should be completed as soon as possible; however, that sense of urgency must not jeopardize the substance of the Agenda. The final document must be very precise and, rather than merely repeating the consensus which had emerged from the various United Nations conferences and the messages of other relevant resolutions, it must clearly define the role of the United Nations with respect to development and ensure that it truly reflected the interests and motivations of Member States. It should prove possible to integrate the various elements of development in a common vision in the Agenda. The text on follow-up to the Agenda should be improved so that it placed adequate emphasis on the follow-up process. Cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions was essential.

14. Mr. ESPERI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the deliberations on an Agenda for Development had gradually fostered an understanding that there was an inalienable link between peace and development. Failure to demonstrate the political will required to advance the dialogue demonstrated a myopic approach to the current trends of globalization and interdependence. A realistic approach to sustainable peace required a commitment by the developed States to

the development of the developing countries, an outlook which strove for stability and security as well as peace.

15. There was no doubt that the developing countries must not underestimate the importance of appropriate national arrangements for development. At the same time, there was a need for greater liberalization of international trade, more equitable market access for the developing countries and enhanced treatment of their commodities, raw materials and manufactured goods.

16. In the context of the dialogue on strengthening international cooperation for development through global partnership, any attempt to undermine development as the prerequisite for international peace and security would undermine efforts to create a world based on sustainability.

17. The Agenda for Development should be action-oriented and should contain practical recommendations for the full implementation of the commitments emanating from recent major conferences relating to development. The Agenda must pay adequate attention to the full and effective participation of developing countries in decision-making on macroeconomic issues at the international level. He underscored the importance of North-South cooperation, free from unilateral conditionalities and implications of charity. The particular circumstances of individual States must be borne in mind. The third chapter of the Agenda for Development must not be considered in isolation from the preceding chapters and should address the institutional requirements for their effective and expeditious implementation.

18. Mr. ELTINAY (Sudan) said that the dialogue in the Ad Hoc Working Group prompted the hope that the participants would work in partnership to achieve the stated objectives. That would be possible if the developed countries revised their position regarding the volume of assistance they provided for development. Measures also must be taken to alleviate the debt burden paralysing developing countries, to increase investment flows to those countries and to ensure that United Nations development activities were funded on an assured basis. The donor countries should avoid depriving the developing countries of their right to development.

19. Peace was possible only if solutions to the underlying causes of conflicts were found, and donor countries should abandon policies which exacerbated conflicts. They should adopt a more positive approach which relied on humanitarianism and the promotion of development, with a view to enabling countries embroiled in conflicts to build on their own potential so that they did not rely solely on outside assistance.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.